



February 19, 2009

The Honorable Frank LoBiondo
US House of Representative
2427 Russell House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative LoBiondo:

The Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) respectfully requests your support for appropriation request titled *Partnership for Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Science (PMAFS) – Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Initiative*. PMAFS is a multistate partnership comprised of commercial and recreational fishing organizations and academic institutions in New York and New Jersey dedicated to the design and implementation of science projects addressing critical needs to improve the assessment and attainment of sustainability for the most important fisheries of the Mid-Atlantic Bight. New Jersey groups include the RFA, Jersey Coast Anglers Association, United Boatmen of New Jersey, Garden State Seafood Association, Save the Summer Flounder Fishery Fund, and Rutgers University.

In 2010, PMAFS will focus on summer flounder and black sea bass, two fisheries urgently in need of improved information and both extremely important to fishermen in New Jersey. The recreational summer flounder and black sea bass fishing sectors include individual anglers, party and charter boat businesses, boat builders, fishing tackle manufacturers, bait and tackle retailers, marinas, and many other businesses throughout in New Jersey. These benefits to the culture and economy of the Mid-Atlantic are only possible with long-term sustainability of the summer flounder and black sea bass fisheries. Despite their importance, these fisheries have significant data gaps. PMAFS will provide this data to the NMFS, regional councils, and state regulatory bodies and, by participating in the assessment process carried out by these groups. Furthermore, data developed by PMAFS programs will be fully incorporated into data resources used to estimate maximum sustainable yield, and from this, yearly fishing quotas.

Fishermen and fishing businesses in your district stand to significantly benefit from PMAFS endeavors. RFA urges you to support appropriation request *Partnership for Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Science – Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Initiative*.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Donofrio".

Jim Donofrio
Executive Director